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Inquiry-based learning in the Humanities: moving from topics to problems using the 'Humanities imagination'.

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Although much teaching in the Humanities continues to be teacher-directed curriculum-based coursework, many university students will at some point be required to undertake project work, often in the form of a Bachelor's or Master's Thesis. Some educators observe that students have difficulty moving from a teacher-directed form of study to the type of work required in minor or major projects, where students more or less explicitly are repositioned from consumers to producers of knowledge (Murtonen & Lehtinen, 2009; Walkington, 2015). Furthermore, some educators in the Humanities are keen to move away from traditional modes of teaching in their regular classes and seminars and move towards more problem-based or inquiry-based approaches as they sense that these approaches engage students more powerfully (Lambert, 2009; Mclinden & Edwards, 2011). Universities often support these moves as they are keen to show that they too – also in their Arts programs – are educating for so-called 21st century skills, where problem-solving is a central facet (Chu et al., 2017).

In this article we discuss the question of how problems might be generated in inquiry-based learning in the context of the Humanities. We use the notion of inquiry-based learning (IBL) but understand there to be significant overlaps with problem-based approaches. At the heart of these approaches sit two key ideas namely, first, that knowledge is best attained by applying it and, second, by applying it to questions, problems, or puzzles that are experienced as genuine, meaningful, and relevant (Dewey, 1916, 1938). In some manifestations of these key ideas, IBL is therefore structured to emulate a research process, where students are considered to be inexperienced scholars or researchers, who will learn to undertake research by undertaking it in a supported learning-oriented way (Andersen & Heilesen, 2015). In all strands of IBL, as it is in scholarship and research, the initial phase when "the question" is conceived of is a crucial moment

when ideas, puzzles, or problems worth pursuing are discovered. Our particular interest is how this initial phase can be undertaken in a conjoint way with students, that is, in the form of inquiry-based learning where there are no pre-defined questions set by the teacher. In order for students to be able to participate meaningfully and incisively in this work they need, we claim, an understanding of how good questions for inquiry are generated in the Humanities. We do not believe that it is something a few individuals are naturally gifted to do but, rather, that it is key academic practice that can be learned and improved through experience and that despite its demand that we make creative leaps in our thinking is also a disciplined and structured exercise, which has some typical forms that we can draw on for inspiration.

In our many years of experience as teachers in IBL settings, that phase of coming to good questions together with inexperienced undergraduate scholars is a difficult one. The idea that the problems or questions need to be experienced as meaningful and relevant is sometimes interpreted to mean that they have to be personally relevant to students and/or anchored plainly in their everyday experiences. This is partly right but if not intervened with we observe three common challenges. One challenge is that students, who are left unsupported or are not constructively challenged, remain focused on topics and find immense difficulty in turning a broad topic of interest into a good question and therefore cannot proceed to a process of inquiry. A second challenge is that students formulate questions that come from deeply felt personal concerns or experiences and therefore, for many reasons that we cannot discuss here, are unable or reluctant to problematise them academically, which is a prerequisite for scholarly inquiry. Third, for good reasons inexperienced students tend to pose questions that are disconnected to the disciplinary field of study, where it requires enormous disciplinary and pedagogic expertise from the teacher to support students in connecting them to the academic literature (and it is often in regard to this latter challenge that some educators express concerns about lower academic standards in IBL). None of the challenges are insurmountable for experienced and astute teachers, but rather than working reactively when/if the initial problem-setting phase becomes overloaded with frustration, we suggest that we better prepare students

for good question or problem-setting from the outset. Preparation does not mean that the teacher should provide a sample of good questions that students can choose from or mimic but to enable their capacity to self-intervene when faced with the typical pitfalls just mentioned and, ultimately, to pose better questions from the outset.

So, we pursue the question of how to develop good and relevant problems for exploration together with inexperienced scholars in IBL settings. In the following we will, first, argue for the significance of opening up the 'Humanities imagination' and here we undertake a 'translation' of C. Wright Mills' (1959) notion of the 'sociological imagination' and show how we through this perspective may enable students to become aware of or prepared to address the three common challenges mentioned above. In other words, we use Mills as an inspirational analogy consciously emphasizing "imagination" over "sociological". Later we will call such a strategy *heuristics*. After letting Mills provoke our tentative take on a humanities imagination, we will consider the question of how we create interesting and relevant problems in the Humanities where we again 'translate' the heuristics that Andrew Abbott (2004) developed for the social sciences and give a brief example of how two particular heuristics can help students develop good academic problems for inquiry. Finally, we will conclude by discussing what is more specifically required of teachers (or advisors, as they may be called) in supporting students in undertaking this work, and here we introduce the notion of the teacher/advisor as *interlocutor*.

As we take our analogy from sociology and its continuing discussions of what the sociological imagination is and what is important for it, we are well aware that the Humanities is not a disciplinary field in the same way. The Humanities has never been one field, or at best a highly conflictual meta-field, and its institutionalizations have fragmented and changed many times over the past two centuries.[1] Today, the Humanities normally exists at high levels of abstraction either as a broad scholarly identity across philosophy, languages, literature, and half-way into history, religion, and culture studies, or as bureaucratic

faculties. So, we venture into contested areas when we let present IBL inspired notions such as (pre-disciplinary) inquiry, problem-based study, the student as producer, and 21st century skills guide our tentative search for a Humanities imagination (see also Parker, 2008). Moving from topics to problems in the Humanities requires a re-orientation in the history of the Humanities from topics, methods, theories, and institutionalizations towards the development of an imaginary, i.e. of the development of a particular kind of knowledge which we call the Humanities.

Opening up the 'Humanities imagination'

Obviously, many students, upon entering an academic field, have little sense of its perspectives, concepts and methods, and they may also not have had any experience in problem-setting. If we wish to apply the key notion of IBL that students 'learn by doing', our task as educators, then, is one of helping them master and de-code the discipline also in regard to what constitutes good problems or questions in that academic field (Middendorf & Pace, 2004; Thomas et al., 2017). To do so, we could take as our starting point C. Wright Mills' classical exposition of the sociological imagination (1959) and help our students develop and expand their 'Humanities imagination'. The main concern in Mills' book clearly is not methods, disciplinary distinctions or solutions to scientific problems. The main concern is the *imagination* as a capacity to think particular problems of particular people, local grievances and feelings of powerlessness, in connection with larger historical and social formations. And vice versa, i.e. how to understand larger tendencies even on a global scale as affecting particular people in particular ways (Mills, 1959: 5).

The role of the imagination is to create new knowledge, new perspectives, and new explanations to well-known situations. For Mills, the primary heuristic move is to think about the dialectical and reciprocal relations between wider tendencies, larger histories and structures, and the particular situations of particular people. The first terrible and magnificent fruit, says Mills, of the imagination is the realization that we all belong to a group, a segment, of people within the same conditions for change (Mills, 1959: 5).

We all shape and are shaped by the dialectics of history and biography. It is the imagination that shows us which of our concerns are local troubles and which are public issues, to use Mills' phrases. In this way, it is the imagination which fosters democratic, collective action and not the specific troubles people have. The imagination is made up of equal parts understanding the relations that troubles are part of and of equal parts thinking them differently for the future. Without this kind of imagination committed to certain promises, peoples' troubles can still lead to collective action, but of a much more troubling kind (Mills, 1959: 1-24).

In many strands within the Humanities, the same or similar relations continue as key questions – the relation between culture and individual, between the past and the present, between signs and meanings, between humans and materials, etc. Introducing the idea of the 'Humanities imagination' is therefore also about introducing students to the in one way simple and in other ways not so simple idea that their personal troubles or concerns are related to broader cultural issues and issues of sense-making in different times and places. It is about introducing the students to the basic ways in which Humanities scholars open their materials for inquiry, questioning and problematization. Our ambition here is not uncover "the real" Humanities questions covered under historical layers but instead to suggest a way forward for IBL in the Humanities which at the same time reduces fragmentation and raises the ontological stakes of the Humanities: what is it that gives the Humanities its field-ness, its institutional legitimacy and relevance for the present and future?

For Mills, and also for Abbott who we will discuss later, the stuff which makes the sociological imagination work is knowledge about history. History is not considered as a particular subject matter (the past) or a particular disciplinary or institutional structure (historical research, historians, or departments of history) but trajectories of present realities and processes of the becoming of entities which stabilize structures, timelines, and patterns of causalities (Mills, 1959: 143–164; Abbott, 1995). It is not a topic-oriented interest

in the past but an inquiry or problem-oriented interest in which the relevant histories are contingent on the inquiry or problem at hand. The sociological imagination is also stimulated by literature, arts, and metaphysics, which topically belong to the Humanities, and in the same way a Humanities imagination can be stimulated by social structures, economy, and politics. It is impossible to separate a social science and Humanities kind of imagination along the lines of subject matter and topics. Histories, literatures, art, economies, psychology, and social structures are important for thinking no matter if you are a sociologist or a philologist. But for Mills and Abbott temporality plays a pivotal role for understanding how situations became the way they are, for understanding the way particular events are parts of larger tendencies, and for seeing unfulfilled potentialities, un-realized promises, of temporal trajectories.

The temporal questions for the inquiry or experience-based imagination are "why is it still here?", or "how have these questions emerged?" more than it is about seeing the past in the present as remnants or as determining explanations. The relevance of history is accordingly an integral aspect of the historical specificity of where we are now in the present. History or the past is only relevant because we encounter problems, or troubles as Mills phrases it, on individual and collective levels which call for a trajectory that makes us see the processes of becoming of the problems we have. So, for IBL in both the social sciences and the Humanities, "the history" of the questions and problems that make "the inquiry" relevant is crucial for its quality and academic relevance. In the spirit of Mills, the temporal trajectories which make certain inquiries and problems stand out and manifest themselves in students' experiences are not historians' questions but questions of the historicity or temporality of the present. Why and how have these experiences, troubles, questions, and problems, emerged here and now? And how does scholarship deal with the genealogies of the question and the problem? These questions are the inquiry's necessary self-inquiry which cannot be answered without a strong connection to disciplinary fields.

The imaginary is, as we have seen with Mills, the exposure of relations between things. The imaginary is a reciprocal practice in the sense that the relations between things come to exist when we see them, and only then they become causalities or explanations. What becomes a particular kind of imagination does not come from a natural organization of knowledge into disciplines but it comes from processes over time through which relations are exposed, and enacted, and a language for its constituting problems is developed (Abbott, 2001; Goodstein, 2017). The Humanities imagination is accordingly a way of thinking about relations between things which re-produces reciprocal relations between its things, its entities, and causalities. What characterizes a "disciplinary" imagination, is not methods and theories, or the empirical materials or the topics, but how the processual drawing of boundaries to other kinds of knowledge creates a virtual with identifiable autonomy. By virtual, we do not mean "not real" but something which actualizes itself in positive acts (Deleuze, 1988: 96–97). The reciprocal relations which the Humanities imagination sees are dependent on this virtual of exchange of meaning that actualizes in the scholarly practices. Opening up the Humanities imagination is about making more explicit which moves, concerns and devotions humanists have, what their virtual is, that which can be actualized, for the purpose of assisting scholars and students in IBL settings in the Humanities with stimulating the capacity for inquiry, for asking questions, and discovering problems.

In the following, we expound on the relation between what the (in the wider sense) disciplinary imagination of the Humanities is and how it is constructed through the rather specific core practice of reading. Analogizing "the imagination" from one field to another demands a keen eye to the differences of actions which expose the relations making up the imaginary. What the sociologist, the natural scientist, the engineer, and the humanities scholar does to see the relations between people, between people and things, people and planet, between pasts and futures is not the same. This means that when we want to stimulate the humanities imagination in IBL-settings, it is important to consider the basic doings which

produce the imagination. In the Humanities, reading is the construction of the bricolage and seeing its connections at the same time.

Imaginative philology

In the recent decade several attempts have been made at rebooting the Humanities by re-constructivist returns to its philological roots (Mallette, 2010; Turner, 2014; Pollock, Elman and Chang, 2015). We see these inspiring, vivid, books as similar searches as ours for the basic virtual, questions, and heuristics which brought about the Humanities as creative, constructive, positive acts. Many different vocabularies are employed in these revisits to philology from "lust" and "desire" for knowing and reading to loving reading itself to the devotion to go on quest-like expeditions to the "original sources" in an Indiana Jones-manner (Jordheim, 2001; Irwin, 2006; Grafton, 2009; Mallette, 2014). What connects these advocacies for "new philology" is their emphasis on and fascination for the imaginative power of the classical philologists, their will to actualize the virtual, and their confidence in its world-changing significance. The history of philology is filled with telling examples from German and French biblical and Oriental philology of life and death rivalries, deadly missions in the search for manuscripts, and not the least examples of the political and social impact of new philological perspectives on the history of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism (Heschel, 1998; Marchand, 2009). In our IBL perspective, the main significance here is the power of the humanities imagination, the drive for inquiry into problems, as it is represented in these recent reconstructions. IBL in the humanities can possibly reconstruct this desire to do things with readings and words, "doing" instead of "learning", actualizing and producing instead of consuming and reproducing, which is the core promise of IBL and many variations of problem-based approaches.

Philology means the "love of language, or words" in its etymological sense. Love points towards the emotional attachment to reading sources, materials, data, things, as though they are languages and words. In the middle of the 20th century, Hans Georg Gadamer defined philology in this way as joy over the

meaning which comes to light when texts are interpreted (Gadamer, 1960: 20). Nietzsche, at the end of the 19th century, defined philology as the art of reading well (Nietzsche, 1966: 1218). In some contexts, philology has an extremely narrow meaning as text criticism, text-editing, or the study of dead languages, but here we will use the wider and more imaginative meaning of philology in the spirit of Nietzsche and Gadamer as a kind of devotion to texts and their interpretation in a very wide sense. This is the imaginary which sees patterns of meaning coming to light reciprocally between texts and temporalities implicating that texts, languages, concepts, are both indicators of something happening in the cultural and historical context of production and factors influencing the same context, even producing the context. It is a kind of knowledge, or a manner of knowing (Abbott, 2009), being produced by the reading and the interpretation of languages in time. Philology not only studies languages as such or temporality and contextualization as such but the interplay between languages, time and place. A somewhat old-school definition, which still holds in an expanded sense, is that philology deals with texts, languages, and the creation of cultures seen as webs of significance which people use for sense-making and orientation. We contend that the key characteristic of the Humanities imagination is the love for and devotion to languages in time, joy about the meaning it brings to light, and with a science of reading as its core practice.

The devotion to reading, slow, precise, careful but also wild, imaginative and surprising reading, is the core of the Humanities imagination and what creates its virtual, its imaginary (Mallette, 2010: 1–33). Kierkegaard (1843) tells an ironic story of the Dutch Orientalist who wouldn't go to dinner before he had figured out a vocalization in an Arabic manuscript. His wife believes that such a small thing shouldn't disturb domestic order, and she blows away what turns out to be a grain of tobacco.[2] The story tells us something about the ethos of the philologist in the 19th century through making fun of it. The philologist is a careful, devoted, but also relentless reader who takes his/her work very seriously. He/she is so immersed in the problem of the unknown vocalization that he/she can't think about anything else. For the imaginative philologist, the work is not only about the text in itself, it is also about the world.[3] The devotion

to reading as a world creating practice which links pasts to futures via lines of transmission, or genealogies, exposing meaning and sense-making in human cultures is deeply intertwined with a fundamental concept and trajectory of humanism, as many scholars of the history of philology and humanism have observed (Jordheim, 2001; Grafton, 2009; Turner, 2014). In 1952, Erich Auerbach argued that the devotion of philology is to "man unified in his multiplicity" and that "this humanism has been the true purpose of philology" (Auerbach, Said and Said, 1969: 2–3). Edward Said translated this essay by Auerbach into English in 1969 and commented in his introduction that "one is always to keep in mind that "philology's "material" need not only be literature but can also be social, legal or philosophical writing", meaning all texts, languages, can be read philologically, by humanists (2). Said's concern with translating this text was not a literary concern but a concern about the future of how to conceive of human togetherness in the world. He understood Auerbach's philology as humanist because it transcended particularities without destroying individualities (2). Like the sociological imagination of Mills, Abbott, or Simmel for that matter, the Humanities imagination is about connectedness, the virtual which can be exposed. As we have hopefully shown, the Humanities imagination is imaginatively philological and its devotions and practices create a kind of knowledge through what some call a historically developed ecology of practices of which reading is the core (Stengers, 2005; Shanks, 2012).

We have now reached that place where someone might ask: what is then the Humanities imagination? Returning to our analogy, the sociological imagination, Mills' claim was that "the social" *becomes* in a purposeful way as an association or a community when people can imagine how their local troubles are part of wider public issues. One of its magnificent fruits are the "we", a transcendence of particularities without destroying individualities, if we dare to transpose Mills' and Auerbach's vocabularies. The humanities imagination is a sensibility towards and devotion to the production of shared meaning across time and place, between people and between people and materials. Meaning is the glue which connects (seemingly) remote times and places, the most obscure texts with the most popular, makes people

experience community, beauty, love, art, good and evil. Meaning creates strong devotions which make people act for greater goods, traditions, pasts, futures and for posterity, for legacy. The experience of truth and how truth claims work are central dimensions of meaning. Despite its terrible record of in-humanity, the Humanities imagine the meaningful and create purposeful exchange of "language" between humans in their multiplicity (Bridges, 2019; Marchand, 2019). Most fundamentally, the Humanities imagination enacts the commonalities, the universally human, of human experiences while at the same time enacting the differences, of culture, religion, ethnicity, gender etc. (Ødemark, 2011).

Our bid is one among other possible bids but our task here is not to define once and for all what is the Humanities imagination but to re-state the question as a key question for our time and, in particular, to engage students in discussions about the humanities and its purposes.

How to create good problems?

In his excellent book "Methods of Discovery", Andrew Abbott reminds us of what inquiry, problem- and experience-based pedagogies and theories of learning have always known: it all starts with a puzzle and an idea. Without puzzles, mysteries, problems, and ideas about the cultural and social world which we as students and scholars inhabit, no new knowledge and no learning. IBL pedagogies take off from this presumably pre-methodological view that students' personal experiences and encounters in and with the world ignite processes of experimentation and reflection. The problems, inquiries, and puzzlements have to be personally relevant for the student for her to really engage with and understand how personal troubles are connected to wider issues. In a Deweyan vein (Dewey, 1916: 124), experiences only become learning experiences if the student's interests in different ways are a stake. Abbott also refers to Dewey in pointing out that you cannot really transfer ideas to the next person, the next person has to get the idea to really know it: "No thought, no idea, can possibly be conveyed as an idea from one person to another" (Dewey in Abbott 2004: vii). As stated in the beginning, based on our own experiences and that of many other

educators in both curricular and IBL settings, many will recognize that the real difficulty comes with this seeming conundrum: how to stimulate good ideas and qualified puzzles with inexperienced students while keeping connected with *their* interests? Abbott very fruitfully bridges the divides between process and form, imagination and discipline, when he combines the notion of *heuristics* with the imaginary of "a field", with all the plurality it entails. Heuristics are openings, gambits, which aim to produce ideas, things to talk about, things to investigate further. That the field is not a uniformed practice is constructive for stimulating creativity, but it is, nevertheless, important that there is an on-going conversation about its field-ness, its imaginary. The natives of sociology must think that Georg Simmel's old question: "How is society possible?" continues to be deeply relevant (Simmel, 1910). It entails reductions but also high stakes questioning explanations, tendencies, and fashions in the field. In the same way, most humanists should be interested in questions such as "how is culture possible?", "what is subjectivity?", or "how is (shared) meaning possible?" Questions that are relevant across history, literature, philosophy, semiotics, and culture studies.

Abbott pinpoints the issue precisely: "It is a surprising fact that many good students, when they sit down to write course papers or bachelor's theses or even doctoral dissertations, fear that they have nothing to say. They understand methods. They know about sources and data. But their own contribution seems to them obvious or trivial." (xi). It is a small wonder that students feel like that since when they are taught the science, they learn about methods and theories, but not how to get good ideas and find interesting puzzles. Usually they are trained to identify 'gaps' in the research literature, but that does not necessarily connect with their own interests. Neither does it necessarily produce interesting problems or enhance the imaginary. This problem is all the more pressing when students need to come up with their own inquiry. But, as Abbott rightly points out, coming up with ideas is also a well-rehearsed practice. Most scholars in a field have ways in which they open materials up for inquiry and find problems to discuss, explain or solve. These ways are the heuristics that experienced scholars have learned over years of practice and through integration into a field and its imaginary, its practices for exposing relations. We cannot expect of

inexperienced Humanities students that they themselves can relate their personal interests to wider issues in the field. We cannot even expect them to just have pop-up ideas out of the blue. Some students will of course be able to come up with ideas but these will often be ready-made by political convictions, engagement in causes, or deeply felt personal concerns where they already know what they want to say. As observed above, most students come up with topics, not problems. While it can be productive to have strong opinions and favorite topics, heuristics can work against the self-evidence of strong convictions, or what is sometimes called confirmation bias. For searching, inexperienced students, heuristics can provide the tools for having ideas in the first place.

Creativity and imagination are relational concepts. Both emerge in "workshops" between readers, talkers, and texts/materials and never in monologue. There must be an encounter and a conversation, there must be stimuli. What goes on in the encounter with texts and the conversations with fellow students and teachers is fundamentally experimental in the phase when problems are discovered. Recently, research has characterized the classical German philological seminar at the end of the 19th century as a laboratory of the imagination, thus pointing to its often overlooked experimental dimension (Spoerhase, 2019). The questions of the "workshop", or the seminar, are questions such as: how are these things connected? And how does this work, how can we tentatively hypothesize explanations to this or that? Experimentation combines different variables and observes what comes out of it. In the Humanities, such experimentation is about virtual connections, abductive leaps, into as-yet un-exposed relations, between language and text, time and place. For example, can we expose problems of or new possible inquiries into contemporary gender and race issues via relating these issues to a classic text like *A Thousand and One Nights* and the female story-teller Scheherazade? Experiments make insertions into the matter at hand, question it, turn it in other directions, expose its problems. One effective and always relevant way to stimulate the imagination and open up contemporary concerns in the Humanities is to expose preliminary thoughts to classics in the field which are still used and continuously discussed as standard types of explanation and

argumentation. These classics need to be put into play in a problem-opening way, though, rather than treated merely as texts to consume and memorize. Following up on our example with *A Thousand and One Nights*, we could ask our students to read excerpts from *The Nights,* examples of current race and gender discussion on social media together with Spivak's *Can the Subaltern Speak?* from 1983. What doubts and instabilities would that introduce to the thinking on current race and gender debates on social media? Or what would happen if we instead of Spivak read excerpts from Foucault's *L'Histoire de la Sexualité* – how would that influence the conversation on the matter? Encounter, conversations and challenges between student experiences, texts, and teachers must be enabled before problems crystallize.

But before we start reading Foucault with inexperienced Humanities students, we need to come closer to a processual understanding of inquiry and of problems. Inquiry is the process of knowledge-seeking which entails transforming knowledge from one situation to another, from a situation of indeterminacy to a situation of increased wholeness. It takes off from what Peirce called "doubt" and "inconsistency", or what Dewey called "an indeterminate situation", which means more or less the same thing: the encounter with something that challenges our beliefs, or poses a problem (Dewey, 1938: 34; Peirce, 2011: 41). It is here the creativity and imagination "workshop" begins. Here, at this stage, the problem, the doubt, the inconsistencies, are not academic research questions or problem statements but descriptions of the situation which is indeterminable. The problem is an encountered, experienced problem, not an academic problem - yet. In the Humanities, teachers setting the heuristic stage for the inexperienced students must provide such indeterminable situations in shapes of texts, films, poetry, art, sources, "situations" which inspire doubt, inconsistencies of thought, and enable the students in connecting with their personal experiences in a problem-oriented way. Reiterating: we cannot expect students to come up with qualified problems without (a beginning) immersion into the imaginary of the Humanities and critical encounters with other students, teachers, and more texts.

The early process of sorting out the elements of the doubt, inconsistency or the problem, should be constructively challenged by the teachers and supervisors via critical insertions, new readings, suggestions, judgments, in a delicate balance between being a more experienced fellow student and an evaluator/assessor. When students are able to pose relatively clear and distinct questions for the inquiry, considerable progress has been made. Good questions provide discipline to the inquiry. Moving from topics to inquiries and problems is challenging for both students and educators since the topical spaces including its ready libraries are substituted with searches for materials which can assist us in changing an indeterminate situation to a more whole one. The curriculum is created in the process and the constructive interplay with teachers should ensure the relevance and quality of the inquiry and the emerging curriculum. The linkage between process and form, between creativity, imagination and discipline, is the hardest challenge to inquiry-based education and in the Humanities this linkage is best achieved if the process is formatted within recognized activities and heuristics for knowledge-seeking practices conducive for letting students see the virtual, see the imaginary. The constructive challenge guides the students towards the questions which give the inquiry process form and points to the relevant material for the inquiry.

Abbott outlines two basic strategies for opening the inquiries which he calls “search heuristics”. He defines search heuristics as “ways of getting new ideas from elsewhere (Abbott, 2004: 113).” The most basic and common search heuristic is making an analogy. The analogy could be about the source material. For example, one group of students that the first author worked with were concerned with the self-presentations by young women on Facebook (a joint personal trouble, a topic). His opening up consisted here in offering possible analogies and inspirational texts, one of them was the analogy of romantic diaries written by women in the early 19th century. How does this analogy influence your thinking, he asked? What were the continuities and discontinuities in female self-presentation and aesthetics? What might we read to be able to answer that question and have something to say about it? The students made searches for

more literature on subjectivity, research on romantic women's diaries, research on girls'/women's Facebook profiles, and they agreed that the rash analogy between Facebook profiles and diaries was productive. Gradually, an experienced problem with women's self-presentations on Facebook turned into research questions on modern female subjectivity formation and self-presentation analyzing empirical examples spanning from romantic diaries to Facebook profiles. Trivial problems were turned into wider cultural and historical issues, and there was something (different) to say.

Or the analogy could be directly about the problem. A different group of students wanted to explain a current instance of a particular, outrageous, high school's custom that they felt to be deeply troubling. The instance was a scandal in national media and the exposure revealed that many high schools had similar customs. The problematic situation revolved around how older students introduced new students to high school life through gendered and sexualized rituals with very specific hierarchies. A colleague asked them, could the problem of explaining this particular high school custom be the same as explaining initiation rites in other historical and cultural contexts? Our colleague, a professor of Medieval European history, introduced the students to other examples from the history of intellectual cultures and various ways in which scholars had explained such transgressive social behavior. What initially was a synchronous moral debate about a scandal became a rather advanced scholarly study in which the history of learning cultures was deeply relevant for understanding the present.

In both cases, the inspiration to your own new thinking about the elements of the problem, doubt, or inconsistency comes from the way others have thought about other things. It is important to note here that the connection between "your problem" and the analogy does not come around by itself. Abbott presupposes that students can make these connections themselves because they read a lot and are acquainted with classic types of explanation in the field, and that they have teachers who inspire and encourage such "rash" thinking in the exploration phase. The connections are basically abductive and

intimately related to the field's imaginary, its virtual. In a setting, where we cannot presuppose an inner library in the students related to the field, a stage has to be set by the teacher for making the rash connections and abductive leaps. A stage which inspires doubt, inconsistency of thought, problems, and provides a preliminary library of possible analogies.

The other heuristic strategy is "borrowing a method" (Abbott, 2004: 118). This is more specialized but very common also in the Humanities. In the Humanities, method may be better understood as "way of reading". Borrowing a method can be very constructive for opening up materials for inquiry especially if the inquiry relates to a branch of Humanities research where formalized and instrumental methods are typical ways of explaining things. Some branches of philosophy use highly formalized and specialized methods just as some branches of discourse analysis uses rather formalized strategies. The same could be said for research using interview methods or ethnographic methods which often are formalized or semi-formalized practices. If the inquiry at hand is related to such branches of Humanities research, then a simple strategy would be to borrow the method of an inspiring text from which the method can be "lifted." Borrowing a method can also be seen as wider tendencies, "schools", or "turns", in research. One highly influential example could be the so-called linguistic turn from the 1970s onwards, when culture studies became intensely inspired by textual and literary analysis where methods from literature research were transferred into many other branches. Think about the work and influence of Clifford Geertz, Hayden White, Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, and many others, on how to open materials for questioning. Or in the history field specifically, where since the 1990s many historians have been inspired by the methods of Reinhart Koselleck or Quentin Skinner emphasizing concepts and speech-acts in researching historical problems. In this way, borrowing a method can be both specific, copying a study of something else, or wider as joining into ways of reading in which "cultures are read like literature" or "concepts are windows to social conflicts" in other times and places.

So, opening up the humanities imagination helps us to think about relations between the particular and wider tendencies in time and place, and helps us problematize through temporalization and spatialization, which may itself lead to the "indeterminate situation" which is crucial for IBL. This move can be followed up by introducing students to the idea of heuristics, and to practical ways of employing these, where we have described just two. The point, in brief, is to stimulate the emergence of puzzles, to which the students have no ready answers and thereby to enable them to have something meaningful to do and something (different) to say. With inexperienced students, the answer to good IBL is not to provide them with 'good problems', but, as we have shown, to enable them to undertake the work of creating interesting academic problems on the basis of their personal troubles, concerns or interests in topics, which affords deep engagement with materials and concepts because they are necessary sources for resolving, even if momentarily, the indeterminate situation. In the same way as ideas cannot be conveyed from a teacher to a student, good problems cannot be conveyed either. Good problems are *transformations* of experienced troubles, doubts, inconsistencies, or indeterminate situations, into inquiries, thinking, which include both questions of how and why the problem became a problem and questions of the problem's possible (and temporary) resolution (Rabinow, 2012; Koopman, 2013: 94).

Concluding discussion – or, who is the teacher in problem-setting?

As we noted in the introduction our interests concern the application of IBL with students in the Humanities in conjoint ways. As suggested, it is a powerful but also demanding form of study for students who may be more familiar with consumption of pre-defined curricula and performance on pre-set forms of assessment. In closing, however, we also want to highlight that IBL with inexperienced students may be a demanding form of teaching. As we have shown, the teacher we envisage is not a facilitator or a guide on the side. The teacher, rather, is an *interlocutor*, who has to help students open up their imaginative powers, to help them transform their topical interests and personal concerns into good academic problems that remain genuinely meaningful to them. Above, we gave two examples from our own context where teachers

assisted students in transforming local troubles to genuinely interesting and highly qualified studies using the Humanities imagination. The teachers stimulated the students' imagination, offered them possible connections, new texts, rash analogies to test, and set their own imagination to work with the students. Our exemplary teachers did not tell the students what to do, they interfered, participated, modelled, and scaled, speaking between the students, the inquiry and the field.

An interlocutor asks questions, inspires, and generously lends insights and references from his or her disciplinary archives. As we noted earlier, the teacher as interlocutor is here to offer rash analogies for example and model how connections may be created between various forms of text. S/he acts as a critical friend in the face of confirmation bias, turns things on their head, asks 'what if it is not like that?', in brief, helps to create the indeterminate situation in a caring way – caring for the students *and* for the Humanities as scholarly inquiry. This form of teaching requires a strong form of what Biesta calls 'virtuosity': educational judgment and wisdom, a breadth and depth of knowledge, and experience with applying various heuristics (Biesta, 2016). A central and specific form of virtuosity in IBL settings concerns opening up the Humanities imagination and modelling the power of devoted, careful and good reading *with* students in order to address and transform their personal concerns.

In our observation, many professors in the Humanities consider themselves expert in quite specific fields, they know everything that is worth knowing about something particular. They identify and position themselves as such and not always as scholars in the Humanities in a broader sense. Further, interestingly many of them are not aware of their own heuristics and find them difficult to grasp onto and to articulate. They may have research methods and even research designs, but the kind of imaginary they use to open up their inquiries and that enables them to ask good questions is somehow opaque. This may well be a result of contemporary constraints on doctoral education and conditions pertaining the academic job market, however, it creates a challenge for undertaking the work we envisage here. In addition, of course, the form

of conjoint IBL we discuss also requires an openness to the idea of an 'emerging curriculum' where the most meaningful texts, study activities and learning outcomes are discovered along the way. Again, for teachers who are familiar with teaching pre-set curricula, this may feel like a lack of control and invoke a fear of lowering academic standards. Of course, none of these challenges are insurmountable, but they require a recalibration of identity and skill-set when embarking upon the form of IBL we have outlined here as well as a commitment to having students gain experiences as scholars.

Through working purposefully and carefully with the notion of the Humanities imagination, and attuning ourselves and our students to core heuristics in processes of genuine inquiry, we suggest that we not only will provide more powerful educative experiences for students in the Humanities but perhaps revitalize the Humanities as such.

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[1] The literature on the recurrent crises of the Humanities is enormous. We prefer not to pinpoint a particular instance of the continuing discussion but merely state that the Humanities is at present a highly fragmented and contested frame of reference.

[2] *Enten-eller* [Either-or], vol. 2, 1962, Kbh: Gyldendal, p. 284

[3] Possibly, the wife is the true philologist.